

National Forest. The sites chosen for signage represent a range of cultural heritage sites, significant to the history of Michigan.

Initially thirteen sites were selected for signage. The first was Pentoga Park Indian Burial Grounds, where small wooden structures protect and mark individual Native American graves. It was followed by the Iron County Museum in Caspian. It is located on an 8.5-acre tract with 22 buildings, including a former mine site, whose headframe is listed on the National Register of Historic Places.

Three other sites have been dedicated, including the Iron County Courthouse in Crystal Falls; the Amasa Museum, located in the former township hall of Amasa; and Larson Park, located along U.S. 2. Three more sites—Apple Blossom Trail, the Harbour House, and Mansfield Location and Pioneer Church—are scheduled for dedication this year, with the other sites, such as Be-Wa-Bic State Park and Lake Ottawa Recreation Area to be dedicated in the near future.

The work of the Friends has developed much local interest and is responsible for a movement in other counties in the Upper of Peninsula of Michigan to carry out similar projects. As a result of the Friends' work, the Michigan Department of Transportation has designated U.S. 2 from Crystal Falls to Iron River a State Heritage Route.

For more information on the Friends of Heritage Trail in Iron County, visit their website at www.ironheritage.org/.

COMMUNITY INITIATIVES

Archeological Investigations at Gunston Hall Yields Information on Enslaved Population

Anne Worsley
National Register of Historic Places,
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Gunston Hall is a brick Georgian mansion completed in 1760 in Mason Neck, Virginia, by George Mason, father of the Virginia Bill of Rights, gentry man, and patriot. He was also a slave owner. Approximately 80 enslaved persons lived and worked at Gunston Hall. It was on the lives of these individuals that recent archeological investigations focused its excavations. In one of the few documents that describes the landscape surrounding Gunston Hall, George Mason's son John recounts in an 1830 journal entry:

"to the East [of the mansion] was a high paled yard, adjoining the House into which opened an outer door from the private front, within or connected with which yard were the kitchen, well, poultry Houses and other domestic arrangements; and beyond it on the same side were the corn house and grainery—servants house's (in them days called Negroe quarters)"

During the first week, excavations were focused in the yard east of the mansion. Two-foot-by-two-foot test units were laid out in 20-foot intervals. The soil layers, color, and composition varied greatly from unit to unit. One unit in the area described by Mason as slave quarters did present an exciting find, possible foundation stones. Further investigation into the east yard may determine the nature of these stones.

The kitchen yard, where enslaved African Americans would have lived

and worked, was also investigated. Remnants of pathways were found in two adjacent units, both 18th and 19th century, meaning that at least part of the kitchen yard was not disturbed by human occupation since George Mason's time. Artifacts were heavily concentrated in this area, from pottery (creamware, pearlware, stone-ware, and porcelain), to glass, animal bones, and nails. A fence post and series of postholes also were uncovered. A formal garden runs adjacent to the kitchen yard, and according to the findings, it was fenced during the 18th century. The fence line runs into the reconstructed kitchen yard. Future excavations planned hopefully will reveal more about how the buildings in the kitchen yard were situated in relation to the mansion, the formal garden, and the rest of Gunston Hall.

For more information on Gunston Hall, visit www.gunstonhall.org.

Preservation and Protection of the New Philadelphia Site

Vibert L. White
New Philadelphia Project

In 2000, the University of Illinois stumbled upon one of the most intriguing stories in American history. New Philadelphia, a community that is known only by a few people outside of Pike County, Illinois, is recognized as the first incorporated African-American town in the United States. Unlike Chicago, which was first discovered by a black explorer, the New Philadelphia site was located, purchased, founded, and governed by a former enslaved man named Free Frank McWorthy.

New Philadelphia, as McWorthy

named the village, was created in 1831 as an enclave that attracted freedmen and women and scores of white Americans who made the village their home between 1831 and 1888. In the late 1850s the village reached its pinnacle with a post office, boarding house, and several businesses. It became one of the most significant communities in western Illinois. Moreover, it established itself as a cradle for black pride and self-determinism, as well as racial cooperation. The demise of the town started in the 1870s when the village leaders could not influence the railroad system to route its tracks through the black town. Without the railroad, New Philadelphia rapidly declined as villagers moved to more prosperous areas. By 1888, the black community had virtually become a ghost town.

The University of Illinois has begun the task of historical and archeological research to preserve and present the story of New Philadelphia to the American public. Through the efforts of the African-American Studies Program, the Lincoln Institute, and the community-based New Philadelphia Association, the University is laying the foundation for the protection and preservation of the New Philadelphia site. In the fall of 2002, Professor Vibert White, Chair of the African-American Studies Program and Director of the New Philadelphia Initiative, will lead a group of archeologists in a land survey and archeological investigations. Documentation will also be submitted for nominating New Philadelphia to the National Register of Historic Places.

For more information, visit the website at <http://newphiladelphia.uis.edu/>

NARA Symposium on Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders

On Saturday, May 4, 2002, the

PARTNERSHIP INITIATIVES

National Archives and Records Administration-Pacific Region (NARA), in conjunction with the White House Initiative on Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders, and 12 major historical organizations, hosted "Reclaiming the Legacy: Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders in U.S. History." A capacity crowd of nearly 400 attended an all-day public conference at the University of San Francisco's Lone Mountain Conference Center.

According to Daniel Nealand, NARA-San Francisco Regional Archives Director, "Reclaiming the Legacy" was the first and largest public event of its kind, bringing together historical insights, issues, performances, and art by and about Americans with 'roots' in China, Japan, the Philippines, Korea, Vietnam, India, Hawaii, and American Samoa."

Following the opening Taiko Drum ceremony and morning keynote address by Congressman Tom Lantos, attendees chose among 40 presentations and four subject tracks featuring acclaimed authors and historians, award-winning filmmakers, performing artists, genealogists, and museum and archival resources experts. Twenty-two presentations stemmed from National Archives research. The afternoon keynote address featured Helen Zia, former executive and current contributing editor to *Ms. Magazine*, journalist, and author of *Asian American Dreams: The Emergence of an American People*. At the conference closing reception, John Tsu, Chair of the White House Commission on Asian American and Pacific Islanders, read a Presidential Proclamation on Asian Pacific Heritage Month.

The conference is a result of the

efforts to use the President's executive powers on behalf of Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders (AAPI). In June 1999, President Clinton issued Executive Order 13216, directing the agencies of the Federal government to use their resources to improve the quality of life of these populations. The Executive Order established both an external Advisory Commission on Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders and an Interagency Working Group.

One decision of the Interagency Working Group was to develop and inventory of existing Federal programs and services designated for

Taiko drummers open the AAPI conference in San Francisco. Photo illustration by Marcia Axtmann Smith based on photo courtesy of NARA.